Executive Proclamation

State of South Dakota

Office of the Governor

Whereas, Al Neuharth was born March 22, 1924, in Eureka, South Dakota and remained proud of his South Dakota roots, returning to Eureka often; and,

Whereas, Al served in World War II as a combat infantryman in both Europe and the Pacific and was awarded a Bronze Star. After the war, he attended The University of South Dakota under the GI bill and majored in journalism. He was editor of the student newspaper, The Volante, graduated cum laude in 1950, and remained a loyal supporter of USD throughout his life; and,

Whereas, Al's first journalistic venture was "SoDak Sports," a statewide weekly newspaper that went bankrupt in two years, from which Al learned valuable lessons about running a business and responding to failure; and,

Whereas, Al joined the Knight newspaper group, rising from reporter to management positions in Miami and Detroit, before joining Gannett newspapers in 1963. From 1976 to 1989, he was Gannett's chairman, CEO, and president. Under Al's leadership, an unprecedented number of women and minorities were promoted to top newsroom and corporate positions; and,

Whereas, One of the biggest achievements in Al's professional career was the founding of USA Today, the nation's No. 1 newspaper in print circulation. USA Today revolutionized print journalism when it launched in 1982, and within a decade, its graphics, short stories, and full-color sections were widely imitated; and,

Whereas, Al retired from Gannett in 1989, and wrote a weekly column called "Plain Talk," which ignited debates on subjects ranging from politics to sports to family matters; and,

Whereas, In 1991 founded the Freedom Forum, a nonpartisan foundation that champions the First Amendment as a cornerstone of democracy and is the major funder of the operations of the Newseum. Al also authored eight books, including his autobiography, "Confessions of an S.O.B.," which was a national best-seller and was translated into five languages; and,

Whereas, It is fitting and proper for the Governor to honor and remember Al for his accomplishments as an exemplary journalist from South Dakota:

Now, Therefore, I, Dennis Daugaard, Governor of the state of South Dakota, do hereby proclaim May 17, 2013, as

AL NEUHARTH DAY

in South Dakota.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the state of South Dakota, in Pierre, the Capital City, this Fourteenth Day of May in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Thirteen.

Dennis Daugaard

Dennis Daugaard, Governor

Attest:

Jason M. Gant, Secretary of State